

From: info@sg.actionnetwork.org,

To: echap1647@aol.com,

Subject: Mayor Bowser must stop criminalizing homelessness

Date: Thu, Oct 28, 2021 9:02 am

Dear Edwin,

You may have heard about Mayor Bowser's new "pilot" program that offers housing to a select list of people staying outside, forcibly displaces anyone still residing in specific encampments, and then puts up signs declaring that the sidewalk or park is now a "no tent" zone. You can read our statement opposing this violent displacement and criminalization of homelessness [here](#). The Bowser Administration is expanding the pilot to more locations and plans to aggressively clear encampments throughout hypothermia season and in the middle of a pandemic, contrary to public health guidance.

Take Action!

Not only is the Bowser Administration engaging upwards of six government agencies, including the police, in clearing encampments prior to all of its residents being offered housing, but they are doing so violently and carelessly. **Several weeks ago, a Department of Public Works (DPW) employee lifted a man in his tent with a front loader and began dragging the tent to a dumpster. He could have been crushed to death if not for the bystanders who screamed at city officials to cut him out of the tent.**

When the Deputy Mayor for Health and Human Services, Wayne Turnage, was asked to stop using heavy machinery at clearings, he refused. Instead, he vowed to increase the number of encampments cleared and to establish a line of police officers around the tents for "safety." (Whose safety? Certainly not the tent residents.) He reportedly said that he could not ask DPW workers to clear encampments by hand because it would put the workers at risk. The Bowser Administration seems to be saying that the lives of people who are homeless are **unworthy of minimal safety precautions.**

We, as members of the Way Home Campaign, are asking the DC Council to put a stop to the violent displacement of people living in encampments. **Join us by sending an email to your local representatives [here](#).**

Thank you!

Amber

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